

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1618
INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCSO J2 QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LA PAZ 5534

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PVOG, PINT, BL
SUBJ: OPPOSITION ISSUES JOINT DECLARATION DENOUNCING ELECTORAL FRAUD

1. SUMMARY. THE THREE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION PARTIES ISSUED A JOINT DECLARATION JULY 12 IN WHICH THEY LAMBASTED THE GOVERNMENT FOR COMMITTING GROSS FRAUD BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER ELECTION DAY. THEY PLEDGED THEMSELVES TO DEFEND THE ELECTION RESULTS VIA ALL PEACEFUL MEANS AT THEIR DISPOSAL, AND, IN THE EVENT THAT THE ELECTION HAS TO BE DECIDED BY THE CONGRESS, NOT TO ENTER INTO ANY COALITION WITH GENERAL PEREDA THAT WOULD GIVE HIM THE NECESSARY VOTES FOR ELECTION. THEY ALSO CALLED UPON THE ARMED FORCES TO RESPECT THE ELECTION DECISION AND TURN OVER POWER TO THE WINNERS. THE JOINT STATEMENT MAY BACKFIRE, HOWEVER, IF IT CONVINCES PEREDA THAT THE THREE OPPOSITION PARTIES ARE SERIOUS IN OPPOSING HIM IN THE CONGRESS AND THAT HIS ONLY CHANCE IS TO WIN 50 PERCENT PLUS ONE OF THE VOTES (HE IS NOW LEADING WITH OVER 51 PERCENT) TO PREVENT THE ELECTION FROM BEING DECIDED BY THE CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE LEADERS OF THE THREE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION PARTIES, PAZ ESTENSSORO FOR THE MNR/PRA, SILES ZUAZO FOR THE UDP, BENJAMIN MIGUEL FOR THE PDC AND LUIS ADOLFO SILES SALINAS,

RELEASED A JOINT STATEMENT TO THE PRESS JULY 12.

THE TEXT OF THE DECLARATION READS: "THE EXTRAORDINARY DEMOCRATIC RESPONSE OF THE BOLIVIAN PEOPLE, IN GOING TO THE POLLS ON JULY 9, DESPTIE THE LIMITED RULES OF THE GAME IMPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH REFORMS TO THE ELECTORAL LAW, OPPORTUNELY OPPOSED BY THE OPPOSITION, HAS DEMONSTRATED TO THE ENTIRE WORLD THE MATURITY OF THE CITIZENRY AND ITS FIRM DECISION TO GOVERN ITSELF.

3. "THE PATIENCE AND SERENITY OF THE BOLIVIANS HAVE REMAINED EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PRE-ELECTORAL, ELECTORAL AND POST ELECTORAL PROCESSES, PROVIDING A LESSON OF POLITICAL CONSCIENCE TO THE DICTATORIAL GOVERNMENT AND THE 'CONTINUITY' CANDIDACY,

WHICH, IN CONTRAST, HAVE LOST ALL SERENITY, PATIENCE AND JUDGEMENT, AND ARE ENGAGED IN SYSTEMATIC ACTIVITY OF PROVOCATION AND INTIMIDATION AGAINST THE PEOPLE.

4. "THE REACTION OF THE ELECTORATE, DETERMINED TO HAVE THE POPULAR VOTE RESPECTED, HAS EXASPERATED THE DICTATORSHIP, INASMUCH AS IT HAS PROVEN THAT IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PEOPLE THAT DOES NOT ACCEPT AND WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY FRAUD OR MANIPULATION DESIGNED TO UNDERMINE THE POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY.

5. "THE PRE-ELECTORAL STAGE WAS CHARACTERIZED BY A COMPLETE CONFIDENTIAL

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INEQUALITY OF MEANS, BETWEEN THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATE WITH ALL THE MACHINERY AND RESOURCES OF THE STATE AT ITS DISPOSITION, AND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WHO HAD TO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES AND CARRY OUT ITS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CLOCK, AGAINST THE LACK OF RESOURCES AND THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF FINDING A TELEVISION STATION IMPARTIAL AND ACCESSIBLE.

6. "THE ELECTORAL STAGE, CONDUCTED IN THE MIDST OF IRREGULARITIES SUCH AS: THE PUBLICATION OF HUNDREDS OF NEW ELECTORAL REGISTRIES ON ELECTION DAY; THE MALICIOUS CHANGE IN LOCATION OF VOTING STATIONS ALREADY ESTABLISHED; NON-EXISTENT REGISTRIES; THE CONTINUOUS PRESENCE AND INTIMIDATION BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES; PHYSICAL ATTACKS INCLUDING THE ASSASSINATION OF OPPOSITION LEADERS; NON-EXISTENCE OF ELECTION MATERIAL PREVENTED FROM ARRIVING AT ITS DESTINATION; OFFICIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO CORRUPT AND IMPEDE THE HOLDINGS OF FREE ELECTIONS; DIRECT INTERFERENCE IN THE SCRUTINY OF THE ELECTORAL TABLES; ASSAULTS; KIDNAPPINGS, AND REPLACEMENT OF VOTING BOXES AND TALLY DOCUMENTS; EXAMINATION (OF THE BALLOTS) BEHIND CLOSED DOORS AND WITH ONLY THE PRESENCE OF AGENTS OF THE DOP (DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ORDER OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOUR) AND DELEGATES OF THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATE; DISREGARD OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL

COURT, WHICH WAS IMPOTENT TO EXERCISE ITS POWERS; BIAS OF SOME DEPARTMENTAL ELECTORAL COURTS, WHICH ARE DETERMINED TO COUNT EVEN THE ILLEGAL ELECTION BOXES; ACTIONS WHICH IN THEIR TOTALITY CONSTITUTE VIOLATION OF ALL CIVIL PREROGATIVES, THAT FORM PART OF A CONTINUOUS PLAN TO LEGALIZE THE DICTATORSHIP THROUGH SIMPLE ELECTORAL FICTION.

7. "THE POST ELECTION STAGE, FINALLY, HAS EXCEEDED ALL THE HEIGHTS OF OFFICIAL ABUSE, INASMUCH AS THE GOVERNMENT HAS DEMONSTRATED SIMPLY AND FULLY ITS DECISION TO FINISH ITS CONTINUOUS PLAN BY WINNING IN THE VOTE COUNT WHAT IT LOST IN THE VOTING.

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8. "DESPITE CONDITIONS SO ADVERSE, IN A CLASSIC DEMONSTRATION OF MATURITY AND CIVIC SPIRIT, THE PEOPLE PARTICIPATED MASSIVELY IN THE VOTING TO EXPRESS ITS SOVEREIGN WISH TO DECIDE ITS DESTINY, EXPRESSING ITSELF CATEGORICALLY FOR THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION AND DEFEATING THE DICTATORSHIP AND ITS UNPOPULAR CANDIDATE. IN THIS MOBILIZATION THE ACTIVE AND CONSCIENTIOUS PARTICIPATION OF CAMPESINOS MUST BE POINTED OUT, THEY BEING RESOLVED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY ARE FULL CITIZENS ALONG WITH THEIR WORKER BROTHERS IN THE CITIES AND THE MINES FROM WHOM COMES THE REAL POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY.

9. "BECAUSE OF THE ABOVE AND ASSUMING THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT THE MAJORITY SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE GIVES US, THE ORGANIZATIONS BELOW SIGNED DECLARE: A. THAT, DESPITE THE IMMENSE FRAUD, THE PEOPLE

HAVE REPUDIATED THE DICTATORSHIP AND HAVE EXPRESSED, IN AN IN-

CONTROVERTIBLE MANNER, ITS FULL SUPPORT FOR THE OPPOSITION CANDIDATES. THEREFORE, THE POLITICAL FORCES SIGNED BELOW ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY TO DEFEND AND GUARANTEE RESPECT FOR THE CITIZENRY'S DECISION WITH SOLIDARITY AND THROUGH ALL THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PEACEFUL MEANS AT OUR DISPOSAL; B. IN THE EVENTUALITY THAT THE CONGRESS HAS TO DECIDE THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT NONE OF THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION PARTIES WHICH ARE SIGNED BELOW WILL ENTER INTO A COALITION WITH THE OFFICIAL FRONT TO VALIDATE "CONTINUISMO" BECAUSE THOSE WHO EXPRESS

DEMOCRACY CANNOT BETRAY THE PEOPLE; C. THE PARTIES OF THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION, SUPPORTED BY THE CITIZENRY'S VOTE, CALL UPON THE ARMED FORCES TO FULFILL THEIR PUBLIC PROMISE TO RESPECT THE POPULAR VERDICT AND CONSEQUENTLY TO GUARANTEE THE PEACEFUL TURNOVER OF POWER TO THE WINNING TIVAET. THIS IS DEMANDED BY LAW, THE DIGNITY OF THE NATION AND THE NECESSITY OF RESTORING THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE ARMED FORCES WITH THE PEOPLE THAT HAS FORMED THEM.

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8. COMMENT: EDWIN RODRIGUEZ, A CLOSE CONFIDENT OF PAZ ESTENSSORO, TOLD AN EMBOFF SOME HOURS BEFORE RELEASE OF THIS DOCUMENT THAT THE PAZ PEOPLE WERE DETERMINED TO GO INTO THE CONGRESS, IF INDEED PEREDA FAILS TO WIN A MAJORITY OF THE POPULAR VOTE AND THE ELECTION HAS TO BE DECIDED BY THE CONGRESS, WITH HARD LINE POSITION AND DETERMINED NOT TO ENTER INTO ANY AGREEMENT THAT WOULD GIVE PEREDA THE NECESSARY VOTES TO WIN THE PRESIDENCY. HOWEVER, RODRIGUEZ ADMITTED THAT ONCE THE ELECTION GETS INTO THE CONGRESS IT IS A "NEW BALL GAME" AND "IMPONDERABLES" CAN CHANGE THE SITUATION. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES A DEAL WITH PEREDA WOULD BE POSSIBLE. IN ANY EVENT HE FULLY EXPECTED PEREDA WOULD MAKE A DEAL WITH SOMEONE AND EMERGE THE WINNER IN THE CONGRESS. CONFIDENTIAL

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9. A PEREDA-PAZ AGREEMENT TO LET THE ELECTION GO INTO THE CONGRESS WOULD BE ONE REASONABLE OUTCOME. HOWEVER, THE PAZ

PEOPLE HAVE BEEN REJECTING APPROACHES FROM THE PEREDA PEOPLE REGARDING SOME UNDERSTANDING. THIS, COMBINED WITH THE OPPOSITION STATEMENT, MAY CONVINCE PEREDA THAT ALL THREE OPPOSITION PARTIES WILL JOIN FORCES IN THE CONGRESS TO PUT SILES INTO THE PRESIDENCY AND THAT HIS ONLY CHANCE IS TO WIN 50 PERCENT PLUS ONE OF THE VOTES AND THUS WIN THE PRESIDENCY OUTRIGHT. THUS THE OPPOSITION MAY BE INADVERTANTLY LEADING PEREDA TO OPPOSE ELECTORAL COURT REVIEW OF DUBIOUS RETURNS.

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